

AMENDED CLAIMS

[received at the International Office on April 19, 2005 (04.19.05);
original claim 1 amended; new claim 24 added; all further claims
unchanged (2 pages)]

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1. A tubular food casing having a coated flat-shaped reinforcement insert which comprises on at least one side of the reinforcement insert a coating being applied which comprises at least one film-forming protein.
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2. The food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the flat-shaped insert is a consolidated nonwoven or spunbonded fabric, a woven fabric, loop-formingly knitted fabric, loop-drawingly knitted fabric, laid fabric or a porous film.
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3. The food casing as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the flat-shaped insert is impregnated.
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4. The food casing as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 3, wherein the flat-shaped insert comprises natural and/or artificial fibers, preferably cotton, regenerated cellulose, silk, polyester, polyamide, polyolefin, polyvinyl acetate, polyacrylonitrile, polyvinyl chloride, a corresponding copolymer or a mixture thereof.
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5. The food casing as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 4, wherein the flat-shaped insert has a weight of 3 to 400 g/m², preferably 10 to 130 g/m², particularly preferably 12 to 75 g/m².
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6. The food casing as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 5, wherein the protein comprises gelatin and collagen.

5 7. The food casing as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 6, wherein the fraction of protein is 2.5 to 95 % by weight, preferably 20 to 80 % by weight, particularly preferably 30 to 75 % by weight, in each case based on the total coating weight of the casing.

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21. A method for producing the food casing as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 19, which comprises forming a flat-shaped support material having a predetermined width into a tube, charging the tube with supporting air to maintain its shape or holding it in its round shape by caliber support rings and providing it internally and/or externally seamlessly with the protein-containing coating.
22. A method for producing the food casing as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 20, which comprises providing a flat-shaped support material on one or both sides with the protein-containing coating, cutting the coated support material if appropriate to appropriate width and forming it to a tube, bonding its overlapping longitudinal edges firmly to one another, preferably by sewing, gluing, sealing or welding.
23. The use of the food casing as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 20 as artificial sausage casing, preferably for raw meat sausage, scalded-emulsion sausage, or cooked-meat sausage, or as cheese casing.
24. A sausage casing as claimed in claim 23, which is used in shirred form as what is termed a shirred stick or in the form of individual sections, the individual sections being closed at one end by a metal or plastic clip, by tying with yarn or by sewing.